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[Review of] Academic Charts Online: International Popular Music

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Internet Resource

Academic Charts Online: International Popular Music. Academic Rights Press.

Contact publisher for pricing

<http://www.academiccharts.com/>

[Visited Jul'13] *Academic Charts Online (ACO)* provides worldwide music charting information. With 228 charts licensed, *ACO* currently offers 44 charts covering primarily European popular music listings, and 4 *Billboard* charts. British coverage begins in 1952, US charts in 1958. Included are 16 British charts, 12 from Australia (10 beginning May 2012), and charts from Austria, Germany, Mexico, Spain, and Switzerland. Additional charts are added quarterly (Japan, China, Brazil, and Finland are scheduled for Q2 2013). A few UK charts cover jazz and classical listings separately, but many specialized charts are not currently available, including *Billboard's* Hip Hop, Country, R&B, and Latin. Content is updated weekly. A keyword search responds with lists of artists, singles, and album titles. Searchers choose one entry to retrieve chart information. Each entry usually contains multiple country table options, including a recording cover icon (when available) and title, artist, label ("none" appears often), first charted date, most recent position, peak position, weeks in chart, chart name and country, and (often) audio samples.

A Current Search box allows the selection of tabular presentations for other available countries' charts, formats, and peak position constraints. Date searching is available via drop-down choices for individual charts. Searches must contain exact matches ("A.C. Newman" works, but not "A C" or "A. C."). Often the separation of search choices is attributable to minor distinctions (e.g., "The Rolling Stones" is separate from "ROLLING STONES"). Having multiple selection options could provide like results in a single table. At times, distinctions within results could be clearer. For example, Led Zeppelin's eponymous first album gets confused with the untitled fourth, whose cover graphic is used for the first album's listing. When an enhanced reissue (e.g., with additional tracks) charts, little information is provided to distinguish the release. In several cases, listings provide incorrect album covers and song samples (e.g., America's "Don't Cross the River" shows Journey's *Escape* album cover and provides a sample of "Don't Stop Believin").

For libraries with subscriptions to any of five e-journals (e.g., *Popular Music*, *Rock's Backpages* (CH, Jul'08, 45-5910), or *RILM* (CH, Feb'11, 48-3026), clicking on the resource's icon performs a search for the *ACO* selected term (using "or") that often provides many false hits (e.g., "Broken Social Scene" presents articles unrelated to the band). Chart entries can be added to a dated line graph. Pointing to a graph line position activates a pop-up display providing chart position information. Graph exports are in PNG format. Separate subscriptions to each charting service would be cost-prohibitive. *ACO* provides convenient access to available charts; additional licensed charts will add valuable scope. However, attention to search presentation and data accuracy would make this a much more valuable resource. **Summing Up:** Recommended. Lower-level undergraduates and above; general audience.

--R. A. Aken, *University of Kentucky*

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